

**TRANSITION TO ADULT LIVING
IMPLEMENTATION TEAM
APRIL 7, 2004
MINUTES**

Welcome/Introductions:

Richard Anderson welcomed members, called the meeting to order and introduced the agenda for the meeting. The Task Groups have been accomplishing a lot and making a number of helpful recommendations that are making a difference for these youth transitioning from foster care.

Richard reminded Task Groups to continue to focus on what the youths told us at the youth summit. Keep focused on the "Deliverables" and remember the work needs to be completed by the end of the calendar year. Keep track of any items that will need to be addressed at a later time.

A document outlining the tasks/deliverables from the charters of each Task Group was distributed to the Implementation Team and everyone attending the meeting. **(This document is attached and was the focus of the meeting.)**

Task Group Reports:

Marie Christman reported for the **Employment/Training/Education Task Group**. (Specifics in attached document) In addition, Marie raised the issue about the CCS-MOU — Coordinated, Collaborative Services-Memorandum of Understanding that was recently signed by the executive directors of the Department of Workforce Services, Department of Human Services, the Department of Health, the State Court Administrator and the state superintendent of Public Instruction. The CCS-MOU requires the above agencies/organizations to work together for the benefit of children, youth, and families being served by the State.

In terms of the pilot programs and pathways this task group is developing, they would like to use the CCS-MOU rather than writing dozens of new MOU's to serve the same purpose. They will look into this further.

Marie said the WIA Youth people and DCFS have made connections in every region now and coordination is already improving significantly.

Richard Walker gave the **Housing Task Group** report. In addition to the items mentioned on the document, Richard said the group would be active in working with the various Housing Authorities to resolve issues on waiting lists, priorities, etc. They will work with DCED, private landowners, business and others in

putting together proposals that will help our youth to be able to get into housing easier. They will have colleges and universities also identify the affordable places where their students live.

This task group will do a focus group with youth/young adults and the Independent Living Coordinators in order to be sure they are on target with the needs of the youth.

Jane Lewis reported for the **Life Skills Task Group**. In addition to the items mentioned in the document, Jane addressed the issue of the need for regional plans for implementation of the Ansell-Casey Assessment. All of the IL training will be done by the end of April, but the people actually writing the individual plans for some of the youth have not been trained.

They are also looking at using a modified checklist from "It's My Life" booklet developed by the Ansell Casey people. This will help with the "hands-on" approach they are promoting.

Lisa McDonald reported for the **Mentoring Task Group**. The group is finalizing plans for an RFP (Request for Proposal) focusing on the use of senior mentors; people who have recently retired from the work force that have various vocational skills. They want to have the RFP out by June. There is no budget attached to the proposal.

Lisa will get a budget out to Implementation Team members and email this information to everyone—with the idea that each team member will either approve the concept or raise concerns by a given date she will put on the email.

George Delavan reported for the **Physical and Mental Health Task Group**. The items this group is working on are also mentioned in the document. George reported that the Medicaid Plus process for transitioning youth and the costs of extending Medicaid to age 21 will be ready by the May meeting and the recommendations will be given to the Implementation Team at that time.

George mentioned that this group has several crosscutting issues in which they will need help from the Life Skills or Mentoring groups in order to achieve. This is particularly in regards to training and education classes for those with mental illness, and mentoring or life skills to include self-esteem, resiliency, relationship skill-building, peer support, etc.

Richard Anderson explained how DCFS uses Practice Alert's to get word out to each case worker and supervisor that new practices or procedures will be followed. When the process/procedures for Medicaid Newborn Plus are developed, the Practice Alert will be used to inform the DCFS workers.

Herman Hooten reported for the **Transitional Support Fund Task Group**. This group will streamline the process for youth, ages 16-21, to obtain funds for needs not covered by other funds.

Richard Anderson mentioned they will need a clear definition for this fund and will set up fiscal protocols. These will be very individualized, unique needs and will focus on the long-term view for these youth.

Since this is dealing with benefits, they will need to determine if these procedures will need to go through Rule-making or not.

Amanda Singer reported for the **Transportation Task Group**. In addition to the items covered on the document, Amanda mentioned that a request for information will go to insurance companies to see who is interested in providing a group rate to foster/former foster youth. The DCFS Practice Alert system mentioned earlier will be the means for distributing the practice guideline for driver's license and drivers education that was approved last month. That Practice Alert should be out soon.

Rich Rayl reported for the **Website Task Group**. In addition to the items covered in the document, Rich explained a number of things they had learned from the focus groups with youth. The youth are emphatic that the website should not be a "foster" site. The youth do not want to go to a DCFS office or another state building in order to access the information they need. Rich reminded us to "test out everything with the youth!" That has really helped them to keep on track.

Crossover Issues:

Lisa McDonald will get connected with the Employment/Training/Education group since the senior mentoring pilot will focus on jobs and vocational preparation.

Terri Harris mentioned that they are working on a new code in the DCFS system for foster parents working specifically with youth preparing to transition out of care and put these foster parents in a special category.

Bonnie Athas met with Tom Lee at USU Extension and he offered to provide training for those who will be mentoring foster youth.

Melissa Larsen mentioned that it is much more helpful to youth to teach them to save money for rent, not coddle them but give them enough freedom to try to do things on their own.

LeRoy Franke mentioned that more attention needs to be given to a “step-down” system from residential care. Youth are going right from a very controlled environment to total freedom and are not prepared.

Many participants discussed “control” issues—with DCFS workers, with foster parents, and with others involved in helping youth. Too much is being done to restrict the youth rather than provide “hands-on” learning opportunities. Herman Hooten will work with the Task Group chairs and IL coordinators to help establish a protocol to address this issue.

The Chairs of each group were asked to stay after for a short planning meeting.

Attachment

Implementation Team Members and Support Staff Attending:

Richard Anderson	Mike Richardson
Jim Anderson	Marie Christman
Vicki Cottrell	Daniel Dayton
George Delavan	Richard Dimick
Barbara Feaster	Steve Jardine
Michelle Barnett (for Tiffany Martin)	Lisa McDonald
Richard Walker	Jane Broadhead
Herman Hooten	Suzette Martellaro
Amanda Singer	Barbara Thompson

Task Group Members and other guests attending:

Terri Harris	Lynell Smith
Mieken Matthes	Jane Lewis
Melissa Larsen	Stacy Brubaker
Steve Titensor	LeRoy Franke
Angie Smith	Jennifer Calcut
Mary Jane McGuire	Pam Russell
Mike Beacco	Ken Hull
Bonnie Athas	Rich Rayl